

SENATOR LINDSAY: Thank you, Mr. President. Members, I rise in opposition to the Withem amendment and in opposition to LR 15. As I've been sitting here listening to debate, my curiosity has been piqued about whether we...whether it's good to have a bill summary read to us, because we have the bill books here, and maybe we haven't sat there and read through all those bills. There's committee summaries on each one of these bills. We can read those summaries, most of us do. Most of us know what we're voting on before we walk in here, that's true. I look at it, I guess, a little bit differently. And maybe Final Reading is an anachronism, and it probably is. But it's probably not a bad idea for this Legislature to slow down once in a while. And when we think about it, in April, towards the end of the session when we're sitting there in Final Reading and we're worrying about which bills aren't getting passed, my guess is there's probably a lot of bad legislation that is not getting passed. You've heard old Will Rogers say that, well, you haven't heard it, he's dead, but if he was alive you would have heard him (laughter), he said something like the state is never safe when the Legislature is in session. And there's a lot of people that subscribe to that. There's a lot of legislation, we know, that doesn't need to pass. The really important stuff generally gets passed. And if it doesn't, we get called into a special session. Rarely does legislation die because of Final Reading. If legislation dies, it's because some of those who know how to use the rules can delay debate on other bills, or be for a variety of reasons, or because we simply don't have the votes. But how often, if you think about it, how many of your own bills have been killed because we spent some time on Final Reading? I suspect not quite a few. I don't like Final Reading more than anybody...any more or less than anybody else, and yeah, it gets boring a lot, but what harm is it doing, I guess, is what I look at. Is our time, individually, is our time that valuable that we can't spend a couple hours on Final Reading? If you look at the figures that we look about, during...there were some times that I guess were kept by the Clerk's office, at one point, in '91, in the long session, total of 56 hours were spent on Final Reading; in the '90 session 25 hours. Is that really that big an imposition to us? Is it really that bad when we're talking about 90 legislative days, or 60 legislative days, for us to spend that much time on Final Reading? I don't know that it is. And whether...if it's good that some of the members, and Senator Chambers uses the time, and that's good. Some of us may use the time for reading bills, some of us may use the time for reading